नारद भक्ति सूत्राणि

Narada's Aphorisms on Bhakti



Y. Subramanya Sharma

NARADA'S
APHORISMS ON BHAKTI

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Karyalaya has undertaken the publication of this and other similar booklets in English in order to bring within the reach of many to whom they may not be accessible otherwise, some of the most valuable spiritual thoughts of Ancient India inbedded in Sanscrit—thoughts which may be really helpful to modern Seekers after Truth.

MR. B. NANJUNDIAH, B. A., B. L., ADVOCATE, BANGALORE CITY, has placed us under a deep debt of gratitude by kindly financing the publication. May the choice blessings of the ancient Masters of Bhakti shower on his generous soul and keep it green, throughout his life, with the youthful interest he has been evincing in spiritual matters.

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PREFACE

"Narada's Bhakti Sutras" is arleady a very popular treatise in India among seekers of God, but it really deserves a wider circulation than it has hitherto obtained. Whoever be the author of this little book, so lucid and practical in its exposition of the birth, growth, development, unfoldment and expression of Bhakti, there is little doubt that he was gifted with the self-same vision of the divine sage with whom tradition has happily indentified him. For earnest aspirants who are in need of sound, helpful advice, in a very short compass, on their way to realisation of God-love, no better work could be recommended.

In the present edition of the Sutras which aims at offering only such aids to the reader as may be quite necessary for an intelligent understanding of the teaching, no elaborate commentary has been allowed to interfere with the heart-directness and simplicity of the original. The work has been divided into eighteen sections so as to enable the reader to recognise the connection of the various parts

and get a comprehensive view of the whole. The translation, primarily intended for the English-knowing reader unacquainted with Sanscrit, has been purposely made free from all technical words and phrases, the very few sanscrit forms left over being either self-transparent or else explained in the foot-notes. At the same time, it is hoped that those who know something of Sanscrit will be able to understand and appreciate the original better with this adjunct. It is with this object that the text in Devanagari is given immediately above each sutra in its English garb.

If this humble attempt stimulates even a few souls to take a living interest in Bhakti literature, the little book will have more than served its purpose.

25-4-1938 Y. S.

नमो भगवते

NARADA'S APHORISMS ON BHAKTI

I

अथातो भक्तिं व्याख्यास्यामः ॥ १

1. Now, therefore, we shall expound Bhakti.[1]

सा त्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ॥ २

2. It is of the nature of the highest love for This One.[2]

अमृतस्वरूपा च ॥ ३

1. 'अथातः' (Now, therefore): These two words generally form a sort of introductory formula to announce the title of Sutra works in Sanscrit. The special implication here is perhaps that realisation of Truth is not of the head but of the heart, and therefore this work is undertaken to provide a practical guide to those who wish to approach God through Bhakti, the most natural path of all.

2. I prefer 'सा त्वस्मिन्' (for This One) to the two other readings 'सा तस्मै' (for Him), and 'सा कस्मै' (for that Unknown Being), for we are thus reminded of the profound truth that God being in our very heart, is nearest to us.

3. And of the nature of immortal bliss.[1]

यल्लब्ध्वा पुमान् सिद्धो भवति, अमृतो भवति, तृप्तो भवति ॥ ४

4. On attaining which, a man becomes perfect, immortal, satisfied for ever.

यत्प्राप्य न किंचिद्वाञ्छति, न शोचति, न द्वेष्टि, न रमते, नोत्साही भवति ॥ ५

5. On gaining which one wants nothing, laments over nothing, hates nothing, delights in nothing, and is never enthusiastic over anything earthly.

यज्ज्ञात्वा मत्तो भवति, स्तब्धो भवति, आत्मारामो भवति ॥ ६

6. Experiencing which one becomes exhilarated beyond self-control, stands perfectly still, and revels in the Self.[2]

1. The Sanscrit word 'अमृत' ('Amrita') means both nectar and immortal. Bhakti is here described as a divine nectar the wholesome effects of tasting which are set forth in the three subsequent Sutras.

2. The true lover of God grows into His likeness and therefore shares with Him His perfections and partakes of His infinite joy.

II

सा न कामयमाना निरोधरूपत्वात् ॥ ७

7. It is no worldly desire, for it is of the nature of suppression.[1]

निरोधस्तु लोकवेदव्यापारन्यासः ॥ ८

8. Suppression means abandoning all worldly and Vedic activities.[2]

तस्मिन्ननन्यता तद्विरोधिषूदासीनता च ॥ ९

9. And exclusive devotion to Him and indifference to all things that are obstacles to it.

1. Thirst for divine life cannot be classed among the various desires for worldly objects, for the moment Bhakti dawns all desires vanish. The true lover of God looks to no reward even from God, but loves Him for love's sake.

2. The 'suppression' of desires referred to in the previous aphorism does not imply active fight with desires, for the more you fight desires the keener they become. We have only to stop adding fuel to the fire of desires. As further activities and undertakings cease, desires lose very much of their force.

अन्याश्रयाणां त्यागोऽनन्यता ॥ १०

10. 'Exclusive devotion' is abandonment of all other supports.[1]

लोकवेदेषु तदनुकूलाचरणं तद्विरोधिषूदासीनता ॥ ११

11. Indifference to obstacles consists in undertaking only such activities- whether of ordinary life or those enjoined in the Vedas -as are favourable to it.[2]

III

भवतु निश्चयदार्ढ्यादूर्ध्वं शास्त्ररक्षणम् ॥ १२

12. Even after firm establishment in

1. Until the aspirant has abandoned all so-called resources, he cannot learn to live in the consciousness of the one never-failing and never-exhausting source, namely God. Desires continue to worry him till then.

2. This Sutra serves a double purpose. In the first place, it aims at restricting the activities which are recommended (in Sutra 8) to be given up. Only selfish activities are to be abandoned in order to get rid of desires. In the second place, it explains the indifference to obstacles of Bhakti referred to in Sutra 9. It is not a life of supine unconcern that is meant, but an active co-operation with divine plan. All works in a line with Bhakti are to be regularly performed.

divine resolve, the Scriptures are to be respected.[1]

अन्यथा पातित्यशङ्कया ॥ १३

13. Otherwise there is apprehension of a fall.

लोकोऽपि तावदेव, भोजनादिव्यापारस्त्वा शरीरधारणावधि ॥ १४

14. Even ordinary life is only up till then, though physical activities such as taking food, continue as long as one wears this body.

IV

तल्लक्षणानि वाच्यन्ते नानामतभेदात् ॥ १५

15. Definitions of this Bhakti will now be stated in accordance with different views.

1. This and the two subsequent Sutras apply to the aspirant to Bhakti as well as to one who is already rooted in Bhakti. The Scriptures being the Word of God, are for ever the lamp of life to a true Bhakta. Walking in the light of the Shastras is for him synonymous with harmony with Divine Order. To swerve even an inch from this path is to him a trip and fall. Having entered a larger and wider life, he has now no obligations to fulfil, though apparently he continues the ordinary round of life just like others.

पूजादिष्वनुराग इति पाराशर्यः ॥ १६

16. 'It is love of worship and other similar acts'-says Vyasa, the son of Parasara.

कथादिष्विति गर्गः ॥ १७

17. 'Fondness for spiritual conversation and the like'- says Garga.

आत्मरत्यविरोधेनेति शाण्डिल्यः १८

18. 'These are Bhakti in so far as they do not clash with the contemplation of the Self'-says Sandilya.

नारदस्तु तदर्पिताखिलाचारता तद्विस्मरणे परमव्याकुलतेति ॥ १९

19. But Narada says "It is the offering of all acts to Him and feeling the highest pang of separation on occasions of losing remembrance of him.[1]

1. These definitions or rather descriptions of Bhakti are not mutually exclusive, but more and more comprehensive as we proceed. Sutra 16 refers to devotion in works, 17 to devotion in speech, while 18 lays stress on devotion in mind. Devotion to God in thought, word and deed is of course necessary for a truly spiritual life. But Narada goes to the very root of the matter when he says that there cannot be real Bhakti unless there is complete self-surrender in every aspect of our life and unless we so attune ourselves to God that any separation from Him becomes utterly unthinkable.

अस्त्येवमेवम् ॥ २०

20. So it is, so it is.

यथा व्रजगोपिकानाम् ॥ २१

21. As, for instance, in the case of the cowherdesses of Vraja (Gokula).

न तत्रापि माहात्म्यज्ञानविस्मृत्यपवादः ॥ २२

22. It cannot be said that even there, is a blemish, the absence of recognition of divine glory.

तद्विहीनं जाराणामिव ॥ २३

23. Lacking in such appreciation is the love, for instance, of adulterers.

नास्त्येव तस्मिंस्तत्सुखसुखित्वम् ॥ २४

24. In that sort of love, there is no idea at all of one's feeling happy in the happiness of the other.*

1. Complete effacement of the self and at-one-ment with God is the crucial test of genuine Bhakti. A Bhakta is never prompted to love God by any profit-seeking motive. Puranas like the **Mahabhagavata** and **Vishnupurana,** have given a very vivid picture of selfless love for God in their account of the Gopies and Sri Krishna. Of course,the relation of Gopies with Sri Krishna is liable to be misunderstood as something physical by the sensually-minded. The author of the sutras here warns Studeuts of Bhakti against mistaking the highest form of God-love for anything so grotesque.

V

सा तु कर्मज्ञानयोगेभ्योऽप्यधिकतरा ॥ २५

25. Now this Bhakti is greater than Kama (performance of religious works), Jnana (knowledge) and Yoga (mystic control of the mind).[1]

फलरूपत्वात् ॥ २६

26. For it is of the nature of the fruit of all these.

ईश्वरस्याप्यभिमानद्वेषित्वाद्दैन्यप्रियत्वात् ॥ २७

27. And because God hates egotism and loves humility.[2]

1. Karma, Jnana, and Yoga are the names of different spiritual paths. These are not really three distinct and idependent paths, but are inter-related at one or more points on the way to realisation. The goal being the same in each case, namely attainment of God, it follows that the path of Bhakti which keeps this view from the start, is more direct and natural than the other paths which must sooner or later revert to it.

2. The wording of this Sutra must not mislead the reader to suppose that God is Himself subject to feelings of love and hatred. It simply means that egotism is the greatest impediment to the realisation of God-love. The more one empties oneself of the ego, the more is he filled with God.

VI

तस्या ज्ञानमेव साधनमित्येके ॥ २८

28. Some think that knowledge is the one means to it.

अन्योन्याश्रयत्वमित्यन्ये ॥ २९

29. Others are of opinion that there is mutual dependence between the two.

स्वयंफलरूपतेति ब्रह्मकुमारः ॥ ३०

30. It is its own fruit, sayeth Narada, the son of Brahma.

राजगृहभोजनादिषु तथैव दृष्टत्वात् ॥ ३१

31. For it is seen to be just so in the case of the palace, a dinner, and the like.

न तेन राजपरितोषः क्षुच्छान्तिर्वा ॥ ३२

32. The King is not pleased by that knowledge, nor is hunger appeased by mere knowledge of food.[1]

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1. The illustrations are intended to warn students against supposing that mere intellectual knowledge is quite sufficient.

तस्मात् सैव परिग्राह्या मुमुक्षुभिः ॥ ३३

33. Hence this Bhakti alone should be chosen by those who seek liberation.

VII

तस्याः साधनानि गायन्त्याचार्याः ॥ ३४

34. Teachers have recommended various means to this Bhakti.[1]

तत्तु विषयत्यागात्सङ्गत्यागाच्च ॥ ३५

35. It results from the renunciation of the objects of the senses and renunciation of attachment.[2]

अव्यावृत्तभजनात् ॥ ३६

36. From unremitting adoration.

लोकेऽपि भगवद्गुणश्रवणकीर्तनात् ॥ ३७

37. From listening to narration of various blessed qualities of the Lord and proclaiming them aloud even while attending to affairs of ordinary life.[3]

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1. The means here described are only accessory, for Bhakti is its own means as has been shown already.

2. The consciousness of me and mine in everything we do and deal with, is what is called 'attachment' here.

3. Spiritual life and ordinary life should not be separated. All our activities may be turned into worship if only we do not forget the constant remembrance of Divine qualities.

मुख्यतस्तु महत्कृपयैव भगवत्कृपालेशाद्वा ॥ ३८

38. In the main, however, it results through the grace of the great ones, through even a little of the grace of the Lord.[1]

VIII

महत्सङ्गस्तु दुर्लभोऽगम्योऽमोघश्च ॥ ३९

39. Now, association with the great, is hard to get, difficult to realise, though most invaluable.

लभ्यतेऽपि तत्कृपयैव ॥ ४०

40. Nevertheless, it *is* attainable, and that through His grace only.

तस्मिंस्तज्जने भेदाभावात् ॥ ४१

41. For there is no distinction between Him and His devotees.[2]

1. Self-effort is certainly needed, but before long the aspirant will know that of himself he can do nothing; the quickening influence of Bhaktas will soon convince him that everything is due to the invisible support of God Himself.

2. This is very important for the aspirant to note, because it is only these Bhaktas, the highest manifestations of God, that are first accessible to him and lead him on to a realisation of God as He is.

तदेव साध्यताम्, तदेव साध्यताम् ॥ ४२

42. That alone should be sought out, that alone should be sought out.

IX

दुःसङ्गः सर्वथैव त्याज्यः ॥ ४३

43. Evil association should be shunned by all manner of means.[1]

कामक्रोधमोहस्मृतिभ्रंशबुद्धिनाशसर्वनाशकारणत्वात्

44. For it is the cause of desire, anger, delusion, loss of memory, loss of intellect and utter ruin.[2]

तरङ्गायिता अपीमे सङ्गात्समुद्रायन्ति ॥ ४५

45. These are in themselves like little waves, but through association become a veritable sea.

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1. Those who are not yet blessed with the company of Bhaktas, should take the initial step of overcoming attachment to objects of sense by holding thoughts of Bhakti in their mind by sustained effort. In good time, when we are ready for it, a real Bhakta will arrive and impart the kind of teaching that is best suited for us.

2. 'Memory and intellect' spoken of in this Sutra refer to spiritual meditation and spiritual reason respectively. Compare Gita 2—62, 63.

X

कस्तरति कस्तरति मायाम् ? यस्सङ्गांस्त्यजति, यो
महानुभावं सेवते, यो निर्ममो भवति ॥ ४६

46. Who crosses, who crosses this Maya[1] (illusory glamour of the world) ? He who gives up attachments, he who waits upon a spiritually magnanimous soul, he who becomes free from the idea of possession.

यो विविक्तस्थानं सेवते, यो लोकबन्धमुन्मूलयति,
निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवति, यो योगक्षेमं त्यजति ॥ ४७

47. He who habitually resorts to a solitary place,[2] he who cuts asunder all worldly bondage, he who transcends the three funda-

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1. The world of the senses in which the unenlightened live is called **Maya** (illusory appearance) because from the highest standpoint of Reality it does not exist. But in so far as it affects people who react to it, it is by no means negligible; it is therefore like a boundless sea humanly impossible to cross.

2. 'The solitary place' need not necessarily be a cave in a retired place or anything like that; the one condition needed is that it must be free from evil influences. For advanced seekers their own heart is the most secret place for meditation.

mental Gunas of nature,[1] he who gives up the idea of acquisition and preservation.[2]

यः कर्मफलं त्यजति, कर्माणि संन्यसति, ततो निर्द्वन्द्वो भवति ॥ ४८

48. He who gives up all desire for the fruit of his actions, renounces all activities and thus passes beyond all pairs of opposites.

वेदानपि संन्यसति, केवलमविच्छिन्नानुरागं लभते ॥

49. He who renounces even the Vedas, who has only incessant love for the Lord.[3]

स तरति स तरति, स लोकांस्तारयति ॥ ५०

50. He crosses, he crosses this Maya, and he takes other people also across it.

1. The three Gunas- Sattva (the enlightening), Rajas (the inflaming), and Tamas (the enveloping and obscuring)- are described at length in the Gita.

2. Compare Gita 2—45.

3. Rites and ceremonies are but the symbols of the experiences of the soul while the Vedas or Scriptures are but partial expressions of the Reality which can be known only by direct intuition. Hence the Bhakta lays hold of the key to this direct approach, namely love of God, and transcends the limits of Vedas and Vedic ceremonies. 'The pairs of opposites' spoken of in Sutra 48 are subjective ones such as happiness and misery.

XI

अनिर्वचनीयं प्रेमस्वरूपम् ॥ ५१

51. The nature of Love is inexpressible in words.[1]

मूकास्वादनवत् ॥ ५२

52. It is like a dainty dish tasted by a mute person.

प्रकाशते क्वापि पात्रे ॥ ५३

53. It finds expression very rarely in some worthy soul.

गुणरहितं कामनारहितं प्रतिक्षणवर्धमानमविच्छिन्नं सूक्ष्मतरमनुभवरूपम् ॥ ५४

54. Beyond the fundamental Gunas, above all desires, growing intense moment

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1. The word 'अनिर्वचनीयम्' in the original should not be associated in any manner with the significance attached to it by Post-Sankara Vedantins. It only means that Bhakti is a realisation so profound that it is impossible to find words exactly describing it.

by moment, incessant, most subtle, and fathomable only by intuition.[1]

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1. The significance of the epithets should be noted:

(a) गुणरहितम् 'Beyond the Gunas.' Bhakti influenced by the Gunas is not pure ; even Sattwic Bhakti inspired with the ambition of knowing God is far below this true Bhakti when one loves God for love's sake.

(b) कामनारहितम् 'Free from desires.' This follows from the previous statement, but it is specifically stated here for the guidance of less advanced souls. Bhakti practised with a view to get away from ills or to attain certain unfulfilled desires is not pure Bhakti.

(c) प्रतिक्षणवर्धमानम् 'Growing intense every moment.' This God-love grows as we advance in our understanding and realisation of Truth. Progressive attainment and progressive love go hand in hand till both reach their one goal when the aspirant has achieved perfect union with his Beloved.

(d) अविच्छिन्नम्: 'Incessant.' It is a continuous flow of loving remembrance, for no break can possibly occur when one has tasted its incomparable sweetness.

(e) सूक्ष्मतरम्: 'most subtle.' It is impossible for the ordinary human mind to have any conception of this exalted love ; so different it is from the grosser love for things of this world.

(f) अनुभवरूपम्: 'Fathomable by intuition alone.' Though beyond speech and intellect, Bhakti is not a chimerical something, for it can be directly intuited when we make contact with God in our inmost being.

तत्प्राप्य तदेवावलोकयति, तदेव शृणोति, तदेव भाषयति, तदेव चिन्तयति ॥ ५५

55. When one has reached it, one sees that alone, hears about that alone, talks of that alone, thinks of that alone.[1]

XIII

गौणी त्रिधा गुणभेदादार्तादिभेदाद्वा ॥ ५६

56. Secondary Bhakti is of three kinds, to be classified either according to the difference of Gunas, or according to the difference of the afflicted and other aspirants to whom it belongs.

उत्तरस्मादुत्तरस्मात्पूर्वपूर्वा श्रेयाय भवति ॥ ५७

57. In either case each preceding one is more conducive to beatitude than the one succeeding it.[2]

1. Just as a river loses its individuality when it has emptied itself into the ocean, the Bhakta loses his egoity completely when he has attained union with his beloved Bhagavan. Then he sees himself and all the rest of the universe as an inseparable part of that Universal Love which exhibits itself in every experience of his life.

2. Rajasic Bhakti exercised with a view to obtain the goods of life is better than Tamasic Bhakti which invokes divine help to do harm to others. Sattwic love is still higher, for it only aspires to know God. (Compare **Bhagavata** 3-29-8 to 10.) According to the second classification आर्त (Bhakti of affliction) is the highest. Here affliction does not refer to any misery due to worldly evil, but to distress due to a conscious separation from God. See aphorism 19.

XIII

अन्यस्मात्सौलभ्यं भक्तौ ॥ ५८

58. Bhakti is easier[1] than any other way of approach to God.

प्रमाणान्तरस्यानपेक्षत्वात् स्वयंप्रमाणत्वात् ॥ ५९

59. For it needs no external proof, being its own proof.

शान्तिरूपात् परमानन्दरूपाच्च ॥ ६०

60. And because it is of the nature of peace and of the nature of perfect bliss.

XIV

लोकहानौ चिन्ता न कार्या निवेदितात्मलोकवेदत्वात्

61. One need not worry if one's affairs go wrong, for the self, worldly affairs and

1. Karma (good works), Yoga (mind-control), Jnana (knowledge) are three other paths recommended. These paths are by no means quite distinct and we shall all have necessarily to tread each of them to a greater or lesser extent. Bhakti is said to be easier than the other paths not because it offers a life of luxury and softness- for there is discipline enough here- but because it is the direct approach to the Ideal through the heart. Love is so natural to us all, that it is recognized the moment we contact it, and from that moment onward a life of peace and joy is ours evermore.

even the Vedas have been surrendered to the Lord.[1]

न तदसिद्धौ लोकव्यवहारो हेयः किन्तु फलत्याग-
स्तत्साधनं च कार्यमेव ॥ ६१

62. So long as this Bhakti is not achieved, the ordinary way of life should not be given up, but renunciation of the desire for reward of actions and discipline preparatory to it, should be persistently practised.[2]

स्त्रीधननास्तिकचरित्रं न श्रवणीयम् ॥ ६२

63. Accounts of women, wealth and of unbelievers should not be listened to.

अभिमानदम्भादिकं त्याज्यम् ॥ ६३

64. Pride, vanity and other vices should be eschewed.

1. This means a complete trust in God even when things go the wrong way apparently ; really, however, neither loss nor evil can touch him, for he is under the care of a loving and omnipotent God.

2. Before the carefree state of complete self-surrender is attained, conscious efforts must be made steadfastly in the shape of selfless work and discipline of the soul.

तदर्पिताखिलाचारः सन् कामक्रोधाभिमानादिकं तस्मिन्नेव करणीयम् ॥ ६५

65. All acts should be offered up to Him and even feelings like desire and pride should be entertained with reference to Him only.[1]

त्रिरूपभङ्गपूर्वकं नित्यदास्यनित्यकान्ताभजनात्मकं प्रेम-कार्यं प्रेमैव कार्यम् ॥ ६६

66. The three-dimensional form of love should be destroyed, and love and love alone should be entertained-devoted love of the eternal servant and of the eternal wife.[2]

XV

भक्ता एकान्तिनो मुख्याः ॥ ६७

67. Bhaktas exclusively attached to the Lord are the best of His devotees.

1. This refers to the process of sublimating every one of our emotions and directing it towards God. All our activities outward and inward, must become a holy offering to Him and then they will be transmuted and welded into pure Bhakti. (Compare **Gita** 9-27, and **Bhagavatam** 10-29-15).

2. Bhakti which seeks to serve and love without any motive whatsoever, which has risen above the triad of lover, love and the loved, should always be the ideal of an aspirant.

कण्ठावरोधरोमाञ्चाश्रुभिः परस्परं लपमानाः पावयन्ति कुलानि पृथिवीं च ॥ ६८

68. Talking of Bhakti to one another in faltering tones attended with thrill and tears of joy, they sanctify their race and the wide earth.

तीर्थीकुर्वन्ति तीर्थानि सुकर्मीकुर्वन्ति कर्माणि सच्छास्त्रीकुर्वन्ति शास्त्राणि ॥ ६९

69. They turn ordinary bathing places into sacred places of purification, ordinary acts into pious deeds, and words of instruction into holy texts.

तन्मयाः ॥ ७०

70. They are full of Him.[1]

मोदन्ते पितरो नृत्यन्ति देवताः सनाथाचेयं भूर्भवति॥

71. The Pitris (manes) are delighted in them, the gods dance with joy, and this earth is happy in their care.

---

1. They have emptied themselves so completely that they wholly live in God. The lives of God-intoxicated Bhaktas like Prahlada bear witness to this.

नास्ति तेषु जातिविद्यारूपकुलधनक्रियादिभेदः ॥७२

72. Among them there is no distinction due to birth, education, colour, race, wealth, occupation and the like.[1]

यतस्तदीयाः ॥ ७३

73. For they are all His own.

XVI

वादो नावलम्ब्यः ॥ ७४

74. The aspirant should not take to disputation.

बाहुल्यावकाशत्वादनियतत्वात् ॥ ७५

75. For it leads to endless arguments and leads to no certain conclusion.

भक्तिशास्त्राणि मननीयानि तदुद्बोधककर्माणि करणीयानि

76. Works on Bhakti should be studied and acts calculated to rouse this Bhakti should be performed.[2]

---

1. However widely they may differ in other respects, they are all alike in their pure and unmixed love for God.

2. Earnest seekers receive, when they are in a fit mental condition, revelations of divine love through texts and passages of scriptures. In order that the mind may be lifted up to that condition, it is necessary that acts like worship, prayer and meditation should be steadily resorted to.

सुखदुःखेच्छालाभादित्यक्ते काले प्रतीक्ष्यमाणे क्षणार्ध-
मपि व्यर्थं न नेयम् ॥ ७७

77. Time free from the sway of pleasure, pain, desire, profit or other worldly considerations, is what every one seeks; so even half a second should not be trifled away.[1]

अहिंसासत्यशौचदयास्तिक्यादिचरित्राणि पालनी-
यानि ॥ ७८

78. Non-violence, truthfulness, purity, compassion, piety and other essentials of good life, should be maintained.

सर्वथा सर्वभावेन निश्चिन्तैर्भगवानेव भजनीयः ॥ ७९

79. Free from all care, ye shall always adore Bhagavan (the Lord) alone with all your heart and soul.[2]

1. Every one wants to live a life without strain, but this is not possible unless one turns every odd moment to account and steadily applies his mind to God.

2. God provides for all our needs; those who dedicate their lives to God are able to verify this. 'Bhagavan' stands for all blessed qualities that the human mind can ever assign to God.

सङ्कीर्त्यमानः शीघ्रमेवाविर्भवत्यनुभावयति भक्तान् ॥

80. If steadily praised, the Lord reveals Himself soon and blesses the Bhaktas with realisation.[1]

XVII

त्रिसत्यस्य भक्तिरेव गरीयसी, भक्तिरेव गरीयसी ॥

81. For all the three divisions of time-past, present and future-Bhakti alone is preferable to other paths, Bhakti alone is preferable.

गुणमाहात्म्यासक्ति-रूपासक्ति-पूजासक्ति-स्मरणासक्ति दास्यासक्ति-सख्यासक्ति-वात्सल्यासक्ति-कान्तासक्त्यात्म-निवेदनासक्ति-तन्मयतासक्ति-परमविरहासक्ति-रूपैकधाप्येकादशधा भवति ॥ ८२

82. Though in itself one, this Bhakti manifests itself in eleven different forms: (1) attachment to the glorification of the blessed qualities of God, (2) attachment to His beautiful form, (3) attachment to His

1. The original word संकीर्त्यमानः refers perhaps to singing God's glory with intense divine feeling. This mode of waiting upon God is in time followed by what is known as भावसमाधि (the ectasy of divine feeling) which in its turn leads on to realisation of the highest Reality.

worship, (4) attachment to His remembrance, (5) attachment to His service, (6) attachment to His friendship, (7) attachment to filial love for Him, (8) attachment to wifelike love for Him, (9) attachment to self-surrender, (10) attachment to being filled with Him, and (11) attachment to an intense feeling of excruciating pain of separation from Him.[1]

XVIII

इत्येवं वदन्ति जनजल्पनिर्भया एकमताः कुमारव्यास-
शुकशाण्डिल्यगर्गविष्णुकौण्डिन्यशेषोद्धवारुणिबलिहनुम -
द्विभीषणादयो भक्त्याचार्याः ॥ ८३

83. So declare the teachers of Bhakti with one accord in defiance of public criticism, teachers like, (1) Sanatkumara, (2) Vyasa, (3) Suka, (4) Sandilya, (5) Garga, (6) Visnu, (7) Kaundinya, (8) Sesha, (9) Uddhava.

1. The Puranas are full of narratives of Bhaktas who have manifested these various types of Bhakti. One or more of these types may be seen to show themselves in one and the same Bhakta on different occasions. Witness the life of Sri Ramakrisna Paramahamsa in very recent times.

(10) Aruni (11) Bali, (12) Hanuman, and (13) Vibhishana[1].

य इह नारदप्रोक्तं शिवानुशासनं विश्वसिति श्रद्धत्ते स भक्तिमान् भवति, स प्रेष्ठं लभते स प्रेष्ठं लभत इति ॥

84. Whoever in this world believes and has faith in this gracious instruction offered by Narada, he becomes endowed with Bhakti, he attains the highest beatitude, aye, he attains the highest beatitude.[2]

1. This concluding section is meant to show (1) that Bhakti is a practical method of approaching God, which has been adopted with success by a good many aspirants placed in different stations in life, (2) that this treatise is a compendium of their views written by one who himself has practised what he preaches, and (3) that it is worth one's while to follow and profit by the teachings of these disinterested Masters of Bhakti.

2. The Sanscrit word means dearest, or the most cherished end; it is here used as a synonym for the highest goal of human life.

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